

# ISAIAH: Trusting God's Promises

First Week in Lent: February 22, 2026



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## Small Group Guide: Understanding Isaiah - God's Grieving Parent

### Opening Prayer

Begin your group time by asking God to open your hearts to His Word and help you understand what He wants to teach you through the prophet Isaiah.

### Icebreaker

Share a time when you tried to warn someone you cared about, but they wouldn't listen. How did that make you feel?

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## Key Takeaways from the Sermon

1. **Isaiah's Historical Context:** Isaiah prophesied during one of the most turbulent periods in Israel's history (742-681 BC), when the nation was divided and surrounded by powerful enemies.
2. **The Divided Kingdom:** After Solomon's death, Israel split into two kingdoms - the Northern Kingdom (Israel) and the Southern Kingdom (Judah). Isaiah prophesied in Judah.
3. **Three Ways to Read Isaiah:**
  - o What was happening in Isaiah's day?
  - o How did it speak to later Jewish people under oppression?
  - o What does it mean for us today?
4. **God as a Grieving Parent:** The opening chapters present God as a heartbroken parent whose children have rebelled despite His love and care.
5. **The Pattern of Prophecy:** Isaiah's messages typically contain three elements - indictment (what you're doing wrong), judgment (consequences), and promise (hope and forgiveness).

# Discussion Questions

## Understanding the Context

1. Before this sermon, how familiar were you with the book of Isaiah? What has been your experience reading it?
2. Why do you think the early Christians (before they had the Gospels) turned to Isaiah to understand Jesus? What does this tell us about the importance of the Old Testament?
3. Looking at the maps and timeline discussed in the sermon, how does understanding the historical context change your reading of Isaiah?

## Personal Reflection

4. The sermon described God as a "sobbing parent" grieving over rebellious children. How does this image of God challenge or confirm your view of Him?
5. Isaiah describes people who "worshiped God with their lips, not with their hearts." In what areas of your life might you be going through religious motions without genuine heart engagement?
6. The pastor mentioned that "before we can understand mercy, we have to understand why we need it." Why is it important to confront our need for salvation before celebrating it?

## Applying the Message

7. Isaiah warned Judah about trusting in themselves rather than in God. What are some ways modern Christians (or you personally) might be trusting in themselves instead of God?
8. The sermon mentioned three elements in Isaiah's prophecies: indictment, judgment, and promise. How have you experienced this pattern in your own spiritual journey?
9. God allowed natural consequences to teach His people. Can you share a time when God allowed you to experience consequences that ultimately drew you closer to Him?

## Going Deeper

10. The pastor said, "Isaiah is holding up a mirror to a nation, to a culture, to every human heart." What does Isaiah's mirror reveal about our current culture? About your own heart?
  11. How does understanding God's grief over our rebellion change the way you view sin and repentance?
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# Practical Applications

## This Week's Challenge

Choose one or more of the following to practice this week:

1. **Daily Reading:** Follow the devotional guide and read Isaiah chapters 6-12 this week. Journal about what confuses you and what speaks to you.
  2. **Heart Check:** Set aside 15 minutes for honest self-examination. Ask God to show you where you might be honoring Him with your lips but not your heart.
  3. **Study Tool:** If you don't have one already, invest in a study Bible or download a Bible app with study notes to help you understand difficult passages.
  4. **Prayer Focus:** Spend time this week praying for areas where you've been rebellious or self-reliant. Thank God for His patient, pursuing love.
  5. **Share the Journey:** Invite someone to read through Isaiah with you during Lent. Meet weekly to discuss what you're learning.
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## Memory Verse

**Isaiah 1:18** - "Come now, let us settle the matter," says the LORD. "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool."

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## Looking Ahead

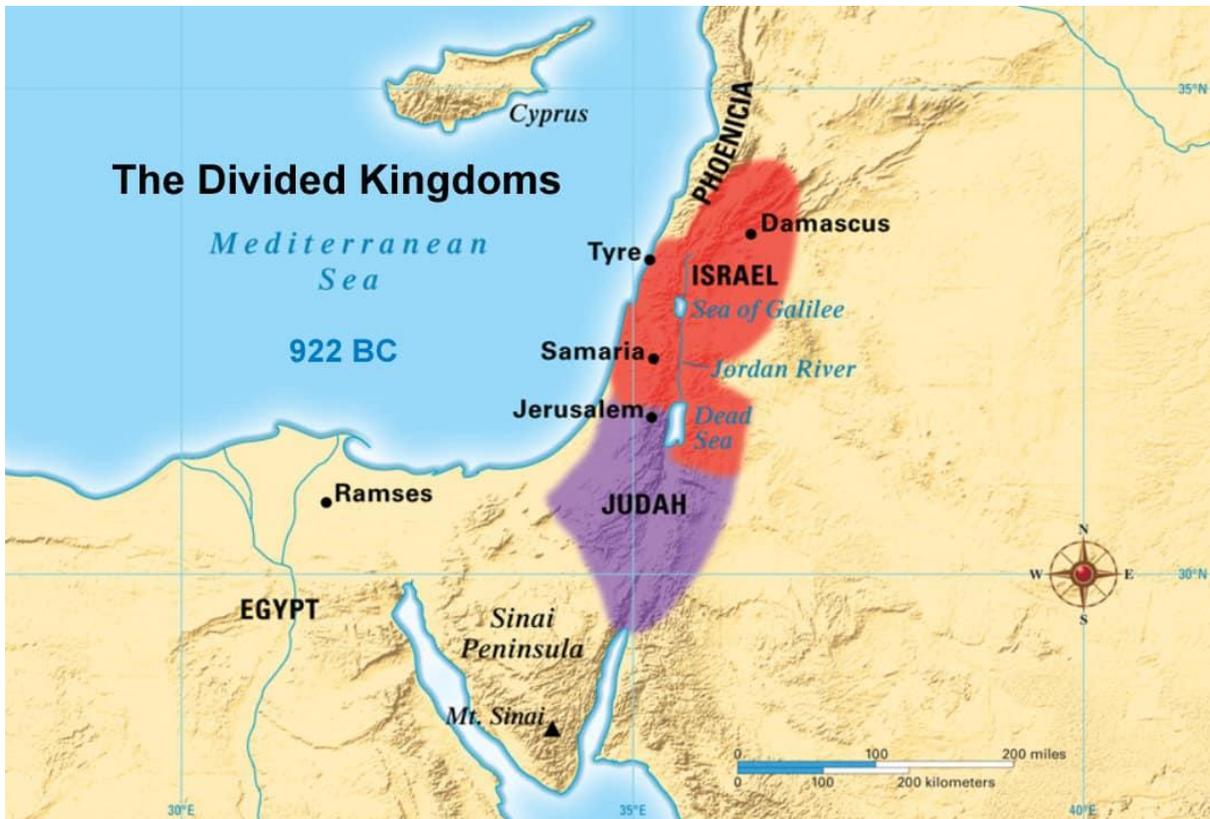
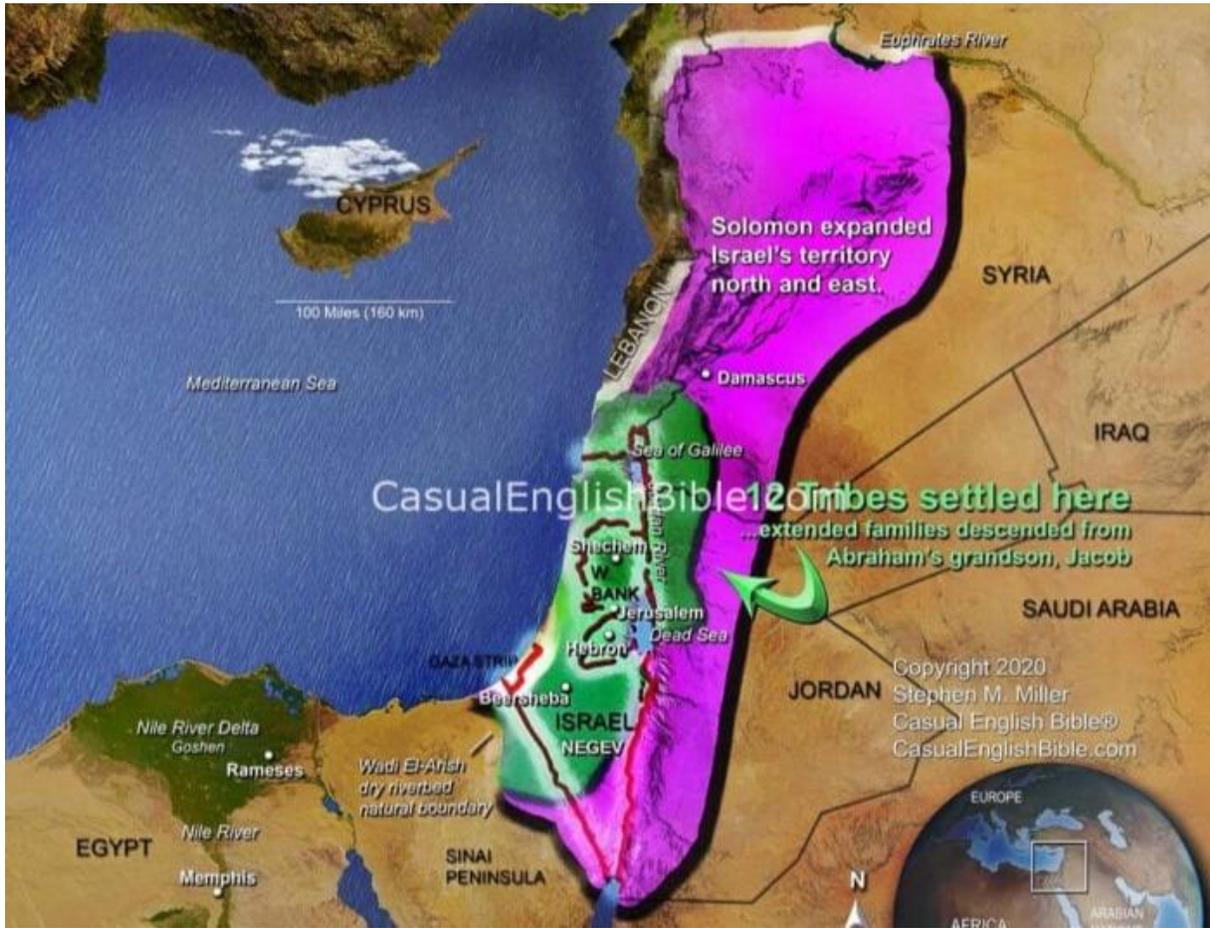
Next week, we'll discover that judgment is not God's final word. Begin reading Isaiah chapters 6-12 and look for glimpses of hope and promise amid the warnings.

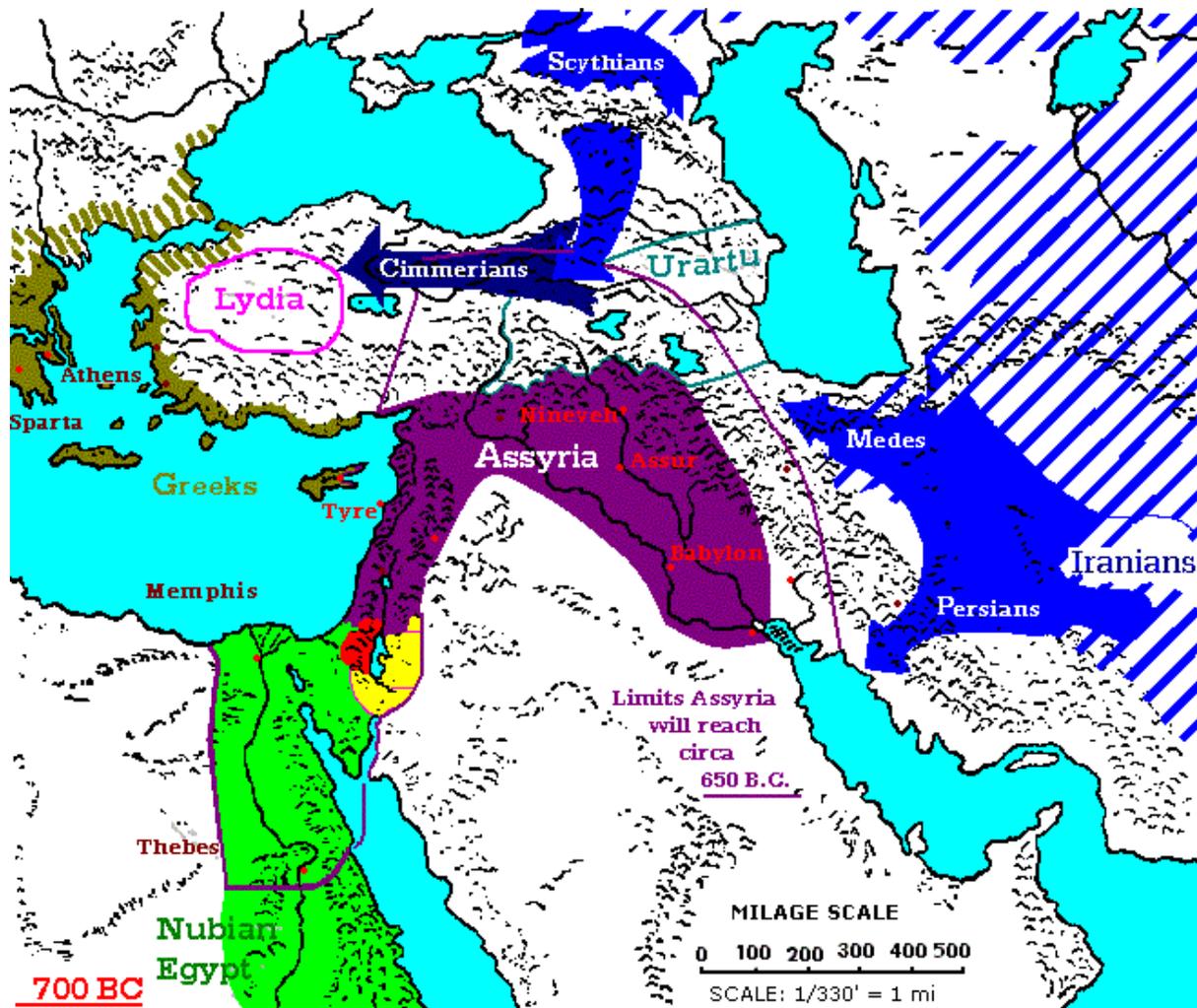
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## Closing Prayer

Loving Father, thank You for caring enough to correct us. Help us hear Your voice through Isaiah's words—not as condemnation, but as the loving warning of a parent who sees danger ahead. Open our eyes to the ways we've rebelled, the places we've trusted ourselves over You, and the rituals we've substituted for genuine relationship. In this season of Lent, lead us to honest repentance and deeper faith. May we experience Emmanuel—God with us—in every circumstance. Through Christ our Lord, Amen.

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## Timeline Ancient Israel

